



Located near Sisk Dam on Highway 152, the Romero Visitors Center receives about 200,000 visitors a year.

California Department of Water Resources' Mission...

To manage the water of California, in cooperation with other agencies, to benefit the state's people and protect, restore and enhance the natural and human environments.

San Luis Joint-Use Complex



Reservoir and Forebay Statistics

San Luis Reservoir

Gross capacity	2,027,840 acre-feet
Federal capacity.....	965,660 acre-feet
State capacity.....	1,062,180 acre-feet
Shoreline.....	65 miles
Surface area.....	12,520 acres
Maximum depth.....	274 feet
Length of dam	18,600 feet
Height of dam.....	385 feet
Dam crest elevation.....	554 feet

O'Neill Forebay

Gross capacity	56,430 acre-feet
Shoreline.....	12 miles
Surface area.....	2,700 acres
Maximum depth.....	40 feet
Length of dam	14,350 feet
Height of dam.....	88 feet
Dam crest elevation	233 feet

Visit DWR's Website at

<http://www.dwr.water.ca.gov>

If you need this publication in an alternate form, contact the Public Affairs Office at 1-800-272-8869.

The State Water Project

Planned, designed, constructed, maintained, and operated by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), the State Water Project (SWP) is the largest state-built, multipurpose water project in the United States.

The SWP, spanning more than 600 miles from Northern California to Southern California, includes 32 storage facilities, 17 pumping plants, three pumping-generating plants, five hydroelectric power plants and approximately 660 miles of canals and pipelines, including the 444-mile long California Aqueduct.

The SWP's main purpose is to provide water supply—that is, to divert and store water during wet periods and distribute it to areas of need in

Northern California, the San Francisco Bay area, the San Joaquin Valley, the Central Coast, and Southern California. Other SWP purposes include flood control, power generation, recreation, fish and wildlife enhancement, and water quality improvement in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

Twenty-nine water agencies have long-term contracts for deliveries of SWP water. Approximately 70 percent of SWP water goes to urban users and 30 percent to agricultural users.

These SWP contracting agencies are repaying the full cost, plus interest, of financing, building, operating, and maintaining the SWP water storage and delivery system.

San Luis Joint-Use Complex

The San Luis Joint-Use Complex serves the California State Water Project and the federal Central Valley Project (CVP). The complex is operated and maintained by the California Department of Water Resources. The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, builder and operator of the Central Valley Project, constructed the complex. Costs and use of these joint facilities are



shared approximately 55 percent by the State and 45 percent by the federal government.

The Joint-Use complex includes O'Neill Dam and Forebay, Sisk Dam, San Luis Reservoir, Gianelli Pumping-Generating Plant, Dos Amigos Pumping Plant, and a 103-mile portion of the California Aqueduct.

The San Luis Complex is located off Highway 152, eight miles west of I-5.

History of Construction

On August 18, 1962, President John F. Kennedy led the official groundbreaking ceremonies for the San Luis Joint-Use Complex. The event was the



Sisk Dam impounds the largest off-stream storage reservoir in the United States.

result of a 1961 agreement between California and the federal government to build the facilities, since both State and federal water projects required the development of the B.F. Sisk San Luis Dam site for storage of flows pumped from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The agreement integrated

storage, pumping-generating and conveyance facilities for State and federal water operations.

Construction of the Sisk and O'Neill dams was begun in 1963 and completed in 1967.

Although water was first pumped into San Luis Reservoir for storage on April 12, 1967, it was filled for the first time on May 31, 1969.

San Luis Reservoir

Located in the eastern foothills of the Diablo Mountain Range, San Luis Reservoir is the largest off-stream reservoir in the United States. (An off-stream reservoir is a reservoir filled with water pumped from a source other than its natural watershed.)

As part of the joint-use complex, the reservoir holds water diverted from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta for subsequent delivery to federal and State water customers on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, State water customers in Southern California, and the federal San Felipe Project in San Benito and Santa Clara counties. Water from rainfall and snowmelt flows through the Delta and is pumped into the California Aqueduct (SWP) and the Delta Mendota Canal (CVP). Water then flows to O'Neill Forebay and into San Luis Reservoir via the Gianelli Pumping-Generating Plant. When Delta flows are insufficient to supply State and federal water project needs, water

is released back into the forebay for delivery by the two projects.

San Luis Reservoir can store 2,027,840 acre-feet, of which 1,062,180 acre-feet is the State's share. (An acre-foot is about 326,000 gallons, often described as the amount of water two families use in a year.)



San Luis Reservoir is visited by people from around the world.

Facility Names

Gianelli Pumping-Generating Plant, located between San Luis Reservoir and O'Neill Forebay, is named for the former Director of the California Department of Water Resources William R. Gianelli (1967-73). He is credited with completing the initial phase of the State Water Project, which included the first deliveries of water to Southern California.

Sisk Dam, which retains San Luis Reservoir, was named to acknowledge the role of the late Congressman B.F. Sisk of Fresno, a prime supporter of the Central Valley Project and California water development. He introduced the federal legislation authorizing the San Luis Unit of the Central Valley Project.

Recreation

On O'Neill Forebay, you can boat, wind surf, fish, swim, jet ski and water ski. In O'Neill Forebay, trophy size bass have been caught. Campsites are available along the O'Neill Forebay shoreline and at the Basalt recreation area, which also has a boat launching ramp and

picnic facilities near the boat ramp. On the west end of the reservoir, you will find the Dinosaur Point Boat Launching area and picnic facilities.

Since wind conditions can change rapidly, boaters should heed wind warning lights mounted on the roof



Swimming is a popular sport at O'Neill Forebay's San Luis Creek area.

of the Visitors Center and on shores of both O'Neill Forebay and San Luis Reservoir. A yellow light means you should exercise great care; a red light signals danger—you should stay off or get off the water.

For wind information, call 1-800-805-4805.

Visitors Center

In the Romero Overlook Visitors Center, photos, graphic wall displays, movies, slide shows, and videotape presentations tell the story of the State Water Project, the federal Central Valley Project—and why the San Luis Joint-Use Complex was developed and constructed to combine State-federal operations. Visitors also can learn about California's water history and environmental impacts on the State's water development. Telescopes at the Center offer spectacular views of the area. The Visitors Center, staffed by Department of Water Resources guides, is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and closed on New Years, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. There is no charge. For tour information, call (209) 827-5353.



At the Romero Visitors Center, former DWR Director William R. Gianelli's collection is displayed.